

## The Miracles Of Jesus Christ: Healing A Leper (Part Two)

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His advanced disease had certainly put the leper who approached Jesus Christ in a bad way. His situation seemed hopeless—until God sent His Son as Healer and Savior. The man, having heard Jesus' message of hope, and realizing that this unique, godly Man was nearby, sought out His help. He would not be disappointed. Jesus' kindly answer to him, "I will," showed His willingness to cleanse him quickly. In an instant, the leprosy disappeared; he was restored to full health (Matthew 8: 2-4; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-15).

The humble leper exhibits at least five notable virtues—sincerity, reverence, faithfulness, truthfulness, and wisdom—that provide insight into how we should approach Christ for healing. We will consider each of these in turn.

### 1. How does the leper show sincerity?

**Comment:** The three accounts tell us that a leper "came and worshipped Him" (Matthew 8:2), "imploring Him, kneeling down to Him" (Mark 1:40), and "fell on his face and implored Him" (Luke 5:12). That the leper "came" and "implored" shows his sincerity in seeking and pleading with Christ. He earnestly determined to reach Him, despite the obstacle of the crowd and the spectacle of his horrid disease. Coming before Christ was the great challenge of his life, so he did what was necessary to overcome his disadvantages.

"Implored" suggests the leper's sincerity in pleading with Him, implying that he pled earnestly, desperate for a resolution to his condition. Sadly, few of us can see the true devastation that sin has caused in our lives and how much we need spiritual healing.

### 2. How does the leper exemplify reverence?

**Comment:** All three Gospels record the leper's reverence for Christ, though each reports it a bit differently: Matthew says that the leper "worshipped Him" (Matthew 8:2); Mark, that he came "kneeling down to Him" (Mark 1:40); and Luke, that he "fell on his face" (Luke 5:12) before Him. Each account describes him bowing down before Him—even Matthew's *worshipped* means "prostrated before." The leper's humble approach conspicuously honored Him, for, unlike many today, the leper did not hide his respect for Christ out of fear of other's opinions.

In contrast, the arrogant will not gain His favor. This society dishonors Christ at every turn with its repeated profanity, its banning of God from public venues, and its rejection of truth and acceptance of the flawed reasonings of men. Such dishonoring of Christ is bringing on our nations an avalanche of curses rather than blessings, and it will not stop until the people repent.

### 3. How does the leper demonstrate faithfulness?

**Comment:** The leper says, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean" (Matthew 8:2), indicating confidence and trust in Christ. True faith always honors both Christ's power and person. Never doubting His power to heal, the leper submits himself to His will. Some prayers we know God will answer positively, as when we ask in faith for forgiveness. However, when we ask for healing or other physical needs, we must faithfully respect God's decision, whatever it may be. By faith, we must acknowledge His superior wisdom in granting our request or not. The leper, in his humility and faith, would never demand God's healing, as though God owed him. It is not our right to be healed, and truly, we deserve death as the penalty for our sins (Romans 6:23). Yet, God heals us according to His mercy and will. A faithful person realizes that reverence should not stop him from asking God for blessings, but he submits to the wise will of God.

#### 4. How does the leper manifest truthfulness?

**Comment:** The leper does not downplay his condition, making it sound less offensive or serious than it was. He is truthful about his case, confessing his uncleanness, as the Bible considers leprosy (Leviticus 13:45). Interestingly, the leper asks to be cleansed, not to be healed. Of course, the cleansing is a healing, but "cleansing" is the more proper term. Christ makes the distinction between cleansing and healing when commissioning the apostles: "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers" (Matthew 10:8).

The filthiness of sin can be removed only by the cleansing blood of Christ (I John 1:7). Isaiah writes, "We are all as an unclean thing" (Isaiah 64:6), and David, recognizing that his immorality and murder had polluted him, prays, "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Psalm 51:10). We all must be cleansed of sin. Even so, until we are truthful about our sinfulness, shown in sincere repentance, we will not be cleansed.

#### 5. How does the leper exhibit wisdom?

**Comment:** Mark 1:40 refers to Christ six times: "Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, 'If You are willing, You can make me clean.'" The leper wisely chose the right Person to go to for help, for Christ was the only One who could cleanse him. Proverbs 1:5 says, "A wise man will hear and increase learning," and the leper, hearing what Jesus taught and learning what He could do, made a wise choice.

Similarly, Christ is the only One who can cleanse us from sin and lead us to salvation. Peter says in Acts 4:12, "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Paul writes, "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 3:11). If anyone comes to Christ for salvation, he is acting wisely. Seeking it from anyone or anything else is foolish because no one else can truly deliver us.